United Nations A/C.5/59/SR.60

General Assembly
Fifty-ninth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
27 September 2005

Original: English

Fifth Committee

Summary record of the 60th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 9 September 2005, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Elji (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Syrian Arab Republic)
Acting Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Saha

Contents

Agenda item 108: Programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 (*continued*)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/59/L.69/Rev.1: A strengthened and revitalized General Assembly

Agenda item 107: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (*continued*)

Completion of the Committee's work

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

05-48390 (E)

In the absence of Mr. MacKay (New Zealand), Mr. Elji (Syrian Arab Republic), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

Agenda item 108: Programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 (*continued*)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/59/L.69/Rev.1: A strengthened and revitalized General Assembly (A/59/910; A/C.5/59/35/Rev.1)

1. **Mr. Sach** (Controller), introducing the Secretary-General's statement on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/59/L.69/Rev.1 (A/C.5/59/35/Rev.1), said that, should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, two additional senior-level posts, one D-2 position and one P-5 position, would be established in the Office of the President of the General Assembly. That would result in requirements of $116,300 for the remaining part of the biennium 2004-2005 and $823,300 for 2006-2007. In addition, a new P-3 post would be needed in the Protocol and Liaison Service in order to provide proper protocol services to the President of the General Assembly, those services having previously been provided on an ad hoc basis. The total requirements arising from the establishment of the new post would amount to $138,100 for the biennium 2006-2007. Lastly, the issuance of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly in all official languages in print and online would require general temporary assistance resources equivalent to three work-months of one Professional staff member and two work-months of one General Service staff member. The associated costs would amount to $60,300.

2. **Mr. Saha** (Acting Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ)), introducing the related report of ACABQ (A/59/910), said that the Advisory Committee had received an advance copy of the revised statement of programme budget implications on 7 September 2005, held hearings on the matter and approved the report now before the Fifth Committee on the same day. The Advisory Committee had paid special attention to the statement in paragraph 3 (b) of the draft resolution that the augmentation of the resources available to the Office of the President of the General Assembly would be subject to the consideration by the General Assembly of the Secretary-General's proposed budget for the biennium 2006-2007. That was particularly important in view of the need to maintain an orderly budget process, a requirement that had been reaffirmed on many occasions, including, most recently, in General Assembly resolution 58/270. In the opinion of the Advisory Committee, paragraph 3 (b) of the draft resolution was in keeping with resolution 58/270, since the actual amount of resources to be provided to support the President of the General Assembly in 2006-2007 would be determined by the Assembly on the basis of such recommendations as the Fifth Committee might make on the proposed programme budget.

3. In his statement of programme budget implications, the Secretary-General indicated that no existing capacity could be identified at present to accommodate the requirements for the additional posts from within existing resources, as requested by the General Assembly. The Advisory Committee suggested that the Assembly, when considering the matter, might wish to take into account the Advisory Committee's comments and recommendations in its first report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 (A/60/7) concerning the need for the Secretary-General to manage the Secretariat as a whole, as well as the need for flexibility in the deployment and redeployment of resources. Lastly, it recommended that, whatever was eventually decided regarding support for the Office of the President, that decision should be subject to review after an appropriate period of time to be determined by the Assembly.

4. **The Chairman** drew attention to the text of a draft decision, whereby the Committee would inform the General Assembly of the programme budget implications should it adopt draft resolution A/59/L.69/Rev.1. The draft decision, if adopted, would be issued as document A/C.5/59/L.80.

The meeting was suspended at 10.50 a.m. and resumed at 11.15 a.m.

5. **Mr. Longhurst** (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the European Union, proposed that, in the first sentence of paragraph (a), the words "up to" should be inserted between the words "additional resources of" and "$116,300". In the last sentence, the words ", if any," should be inserted after the words "the actual costs". In the first sentence of paragraph (b), the words "having considered the detailed

recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, decides to inform the General Assembly that" should be inserted before the words "the adoption of the draft resolution"; the amount "$961,400" should be replaced with the amount "$823,300" and the words "and $138,100 for the Protocol and Liaison Service" should be deleted. The purpose of those amendments was to make clear that the General Assembly was not considering the establishment of an additional P-3 post in the Protocol and Liaison Service.

6. **Mr. Kozaki** (Japan) emphasized that the reference in the draft decision to the amount of $116,300 did not prejudge the outcome of the Assembly's deliberations at its sixtieth session.

7. **Mr. El Naggar** (Egypt) said that strengthening the Office of the President of the General Assembly was an important element of the Secretary-General's reform package. The adoption of draft resolution A/59/L.69/Rev.1 would underscore the President's leadership role in all matters on the Assembly's agenda.

8. *The draft decision, as orally amended, was adopted.*

Agenda item 107: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (*continued*) (A/C.5/59/L.79)

Draft decision A/C.5/59/L.79

9. **Ms. Shah** (United States of America) said that, while her delegation would have liked to conclude discussion on a draft resolution on the capital master plan, it appeared that no consensus could be reached. It would therefore be advisable for the Committee to revert to the matter at the General Assembly's sixtieth session. The loan offer made by her Government to finance the capital master plan project would expire on 30 September 2005. However, she was pleased to report that it would continue to be able to offer a loan in the new fiscal year and that, owing to an improved forecast for the United States economy, the maximum rate of interest on the loan would be reduced to 5.35 per cent. The other terms would remain the same. A formal loan offer would be sent to the Secretary-General in October. Her delegation believed that it continued to be in the best interests of all Member States to support the Secretary-General in entering into a loan agreement with the United States Government in order to preserve the loan as a financial option. It looked forward to working with other delegations to produce a draft resolution containing language acceptable to all parties.

10. **Mr. Berti Oliva** (Cuba) expressed surprise that the Committee had been unable to take action on the matter, despite having been so close to achieving a consensus. His delegation, for its part, had been ready to approve a draft resolution. A great deal of meeting time had been wasted on fruitless discussions. That was a reflection on the manner in which the negotiations had been conducted. His delegation trusted that agreement could be reached soon and would await the new proposal by the host Government with interest.

11. **Mr. Longhurst** (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that it continued to attach great importance to the capital master plan. It trusted that the Committee would move forward swiftly on the issue at the sixtieth session.

12. **Mr. Mazumdar** (India) said that his delegation would have liked the Committee to conclude its consideration of the matter at the current session. However, it was encouraged by the possibility of securing a lower rate of interest on the loan from the host Government.

13. *Draft decision A/C.5/59/L.79 was adopted.*

Completion of the Committee's work

14. **The Chairman** declared that the Fifth Committee had completed its work for the fifty-ninth session.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.